

# PORTAGE COUNTY COMBINED GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT



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## **Environmental health services conducted 15,800 inspections and consultations in 2009**

What does your favorite french fry vendor at the Randolph Fair have in common with local public beaches? They are both inspected by the Portage County Health Department. The Environmental Services Division of the health department employs six sanitarians and one supervisor who are responsible for overseeing installations and permits for septic systems and water supply systems. In addition to permits and installations, the Environmental Services also oversees follow-up operational inspections for both new sewage systems and water systems after they have been in use. They are also in charge of following up on solid waste and sewage nuisance complaints, inspecting public pools, spas and beaches, manufactured homes and campgrounds, grocery stores, convenience stores and supermarkets such as Walmart and Target. Environmental Services work resulted in over 15,800 inspections and consultations in 2009. These services keep our food and water supplies safe for every day use.

Jack Madved is a Registered Sanitarian employed by the Portage County Health Department. He is responsible for inspecting wells and following up on sewage nuisance complaints. "I spend time with residents to help them understand the state mandates on their well systems. It can be overwhelming to interpret that information by yourself. I find it rewarding to see residents understand that their health is connected to their water well, and why it's important to keep wells in good working order."

Jack, also a Portage County resident, was responsible for enforcing Jared's Law. The state law helped clean up environmental hazards in local schools. "Jared's Law made every school in Portage County mercury-free, even in the science rooms. Ohio has since revoked the law, but the Portage County Health Department still conducts school inspections because it's important to keep our schools safe from environmental health hazards." Each year, the Portage County Health Department checks each school for damage to its structure and playground equipment for safety hazards. Sanitarians check the grounds for trash and standing water, both of which can cause disease. School buildings are checked for cleanliness and safety.

From the promotion of health and wellness initiatives to the prevention of disease, the organized efforts of public health professionals touch countless lives in Portage County. To learn more about the services provided by the Environmental Health Division, please contact the Portage County Health Department at 330-296-9919.

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